

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8714

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 7456

EXDIS

MOSCOW FOR SECRETARY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR LE US

SUBJ: PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT NIXON AND

CAIRO MEETING OF ARAB DEFENSE COUNCIL

REF: DEPTTEL 141250 SENT MOSCOW AS TOSEC 150

1. WE CONCUR COMPLETELY WITH ANALYSIS CONTAINED
PARA 1 REFTEL AND ITS RECOMMENDATION. RE PARAS 2 AND
3, FOR THE LIFE OF US WE COULD NOT IMPROVE ON SUGGESTED REPLY.

2. RE PARA 4, I ENDEAVORED SEE PRIMIN SOLH THIS MORNING TO
BE SURE THAT ACTING SECSTATE SISCO'S PERSONAL VIEWS
HAD BEEN ACCURATELY REPORTED BY KABBANI. SOLH IN
DAMASCUS. THEREFORE I CALLED ON PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR
BOUTROS DIB AND TRANSLATED FOR HIM PARA 4. HE REQUESTED
I DO SO AT DICTATION SPEED FOR HE SAID HE CONCURRED
COMPLETELY WITH SISCO'S VIEWS AND WOULD BE PRESENTING THEM TO
FRANGIE, WHO IS OUT OF TOWN AT HIS SUMMER RESIDENCE, LATER ON
TODAY. DIB INDICATED HE WOULD ALSO INCORPORATE SISCO'S VIEWS IN
PAPER HE IS PREPARING FOR PRIMIN (SEE BELOW).

3. DIB THEN TOLD ME THAT LEBANESE HAD REQUESTED THIS
MORNING OF ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN RIAD THAT ARAB DEFENSE COUNCIL
MEETING BE POSTPONED FROM JULY 1 UNTIL JULY 3. GOL'S

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POSITION MOTIVATED BY FACT THAT QUOTE MODERATE UNQUOTE ARABS

PRINCIPALLY SAUDIS, KUWAITIS, BUT ALSO OTHER GULF STATE REPS, COULD NOT RPT NOT ATTEND MEETING JULY 1. LEBANON ALSO CITED FACT THAT FORMIN NAFFA CURRENTLY IN MANILA ENDEAVORING MEDIATE PHILIPPINE-MOSLEM DIFFERENCES. RIAD SUBSEQUENTLY CALLED BACK AGREEING TO WEDNESDAY, JULY 3 MEETING. I ASKED IF THAT WOULD MEAN THAT NAFFA WOULD REPRESENT GOL AND DIB SAID HE WOULD NOT (NOT WITHSTANDING THIS FACT BEING CITED TO RIAD) FOR GOL COULD NOT RPT NOT BE REPRESENTED BY TWO CHRISTIANS (NAFFA AND MINDEF MAALOUF). GOL WILL BE REPRESENTED BY PRIMIN SOLH (MOSLEM) WHO WILL ATTEND NOT RPT NOT AS PRIMIN BUT AS ACTING FORMIN, PLUS MAALOUF.

4. DIB IS PREPARING FOR PRIMIN A DETAILED BRIEFING PAPER RE CAIRO. PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF GOL DELEGATION, ACCORDING TO DIB, WILL BE TO REDUCE AREA TENSIONS AND GAIN TIME. IT IS THEREFORE ESSENTIAL THAT ISRAELIS IN MEANTIME REMAIN CALM.

5. GOL AT THIS MOMENT IS FACED WITH QUASI UNANIMOUS ARAB OFFERS FOR ALL SORTS OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE. AS REPORTED EMBTEL 7430, GOL IS RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT ARAB MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR THIS COULD PROVOKE ESCALATED ISRAELI ATTACKS AND POSSIBLY LEAD TO ANOTHER TRAGIC MIDDLE EASTERN WAR. GOL, HOWEVER, DOES NOT WISH TO REJECT OUT OF HAND ARAB ASSISTANCE FOR BOTH INTRA-ARAB RELATIONS AND ALSO INTERNAL LEBANESE REASONS. WHAT DIB IS THEREFORE PROPOSING TO SOLH AND WHICH HE GAVE ME TO UNDERSTAND HAS PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S GENERAL BLESSING IS THAT AT OPENING PUBLIC CAIRO MEETING SOLH MAKE RELATIVELY ANODYNE MODERATE SPEECH DESCRIBING GOL'S CURRENT POSITION BUT AVOIDING DIRECT RESPONSE TO ARAB STATES' OFFER OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE. SUBSEQUENT TO FOREGOING, BUT PRIOR TO CLOSED AND SUPPOSEDLY SECRET SESSIONS SOLH WOULD IN PRIVATE "SECRET" CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS LET IT BE KNOWN TO MODERATE ARABS THAT GOL IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL ARAB MILITARY ASSISTANCE. IN EXECUTIVE SESSION GOL DELEGATION WOULD THEN PRESENT ITS ANALYSIS OF THE DANGERS OF ACCEPTING ALL OUT ARAB MILITARY AID, I.E., THIS WOULD PROVOKE ISRAEL TO UNDERTAKE MORE EXTENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN LEBANON AND COULD WELL RISK RESUMPTION OF ALL-OUT MIDDLE EAST CONFLAGRATION. DIB IS CONVINCED THAT MODERATES PRINCIPALLY EGYPTIANS AND SYRIANS

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WOULD GO ALONG WITH GOL'S ANALYSIS FOR HE IS CERTAIN THAT NOT ONLY DO THESE TWO COUNTRIES WISH TO AVOID RESUMPTION WAR BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY THEY ARE NOT AT ALL KEEN ABOUT IMPLEMENTING THEIR OFFER FOR ALL-OUT MILITARY ASSISTANCE. THIS OFFER, DIB IS CONVINCED, WAS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS AND WAS NOT GENUINE.

6. DIB ASKED MY OPINION FOR THE FOREGOING. I TOLD HIM THAT

IT SEEMED TO ME THAT DANGEROUS ELEMENT OF HIS PROGRAM WAS THAT "SECRET" STATEMENTS TO OTHER ARAB REPS MIGHT LEAK AND THAT ISRAELIS WOULD THEN HAVE TO RESPOND PUBLICLY WITH ADDITIONAL THREATS AGAINST LEBANON. I ALSO SAID THAT IT SEEMED TO ME THAT MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION WAS AVOIDING ANY ISRAELI MISUNDERSTANDING OF GOL POSITION. DIB HEARTILY CONCURRED BUT COUNTERED WITH STATEMENT THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL ISRAEL NOT ENGAGE IN FURTHER ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO CAIRO MEETING. DIB DID NOT RPT NOT SO STATE NOR DID I RAISE THIS POINT BUT I RECEIVED A DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD NOT RPT NOT OBJECT IF FOREGOING WERE MADE KNOWN TO RABIN IN UTMOST CONFIDENCE. THE ONE FACTOR HOWEVER THAT MUST BE BORNE IN MIND IS THAT DIB EMPHASIZED TO ME THAT FOREGOING IS MERELY HIS RECOMMENDATION TO SOLH AND THAT SOLH MAY NOT FOLLOW IT. (COMMENT: WE FEAR HE MAY BLOW IT, BUT ARE SOMEWHAT REASSURED BY MAALOUF'S PRESENCE.) NEVERTHELESS, DIB EMPHASIZED THAT THE OVERALL GOL POSITION AT THE CAIRO MEETING HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AT LAST WEDNESDAY'S CABINET MEETING AND THAT THERE WAS AN UNUSUAL UNANIMITY OF APPROVAL WITHIN THE CABINET ON THE OVERALL RPT OVERALL GOL POSITION AT CAIRO AND THE FACT THAT ALL POSSIBLE ACTION MUST BE TAKEN AT CAIRO TO REDUCE LEBANESE-ISRAELI TENSIONS. DIB ALSO OPINED THAT THIS LEBANESE VIEW WOULD BE APPROVED BY THE MAJORITY OF ARAB REPRESENTATIVES AND THAT THE KUWAITIS HAD ALREADY INDICATED THEY WERE IN SUPPORT OF THE GOL'S OVERALL POSITION. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTIONS, DIB SAID HE DID NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHETHER LIBYA OR IRAQ WOULD BE REPRESENTED AT CAIRO. I INQUIRED WHETHER FOREGOING WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY PRIMIN SOLH WITH SYRIA' PRESIDENT ASSAD TODAY. DIB SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD NOT RPT NOT FOR PRIMIN WAS PLANNING TO DISCUSS OTHER MATTERS AND PRIMIN DID NOT YET HAVE DIB'S VIEWS ON PAPER.

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7. FOREGOING I BELIEVE LENDS WEIGHT TO SISCO'S RECOMMENDATION THAT PRESIDENT RESPOND AS SOON AS CONVENIENT TO FRANGIE'S LETTER.

8. I AM SENDING THIS ONLY TO THE SECRETARY AND THE DEPARTMENT BUT WOULD HAVE NO RPT NO OBJECTION IF THE LATTER WERE TO GIVE IT SUCH LATERAL DISTRIBUTION AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE.
GODLEY

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NNN

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